

# California Agency Watershed Management Strategic Plan

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## *Introduction*

### ■ Background

In April 2002, the State Water Resources Control Board [a department under the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA)], and the California Resources Agency published a Report to the Legislature, Addressing the Need to Protect California's Watersheds: Working with Local Partnerships as required by AB2117. This report identified issues local watershed partnerships have when trying to work with or receive services from the State. In order to address these issues, the Cal/EPA and Resources Agency are partnering to develop the California Agency Watershed Management Strategic Plan.

### ■ What the Plan Is/Is not

This Strategic Plan is focused on improving internal State Agency processes and procedures, in order to improve data sharing, service delivery, and investment of State funds in local efforts. This Strategic Plan is not intended to dictate to local and federal stakeholders how they should work in local watersheds. Rather, it is designed to provide State Agency staff with a framework for working with all stakeholders to help facilitate the improvement of watershed health and to promote partnerships among State, local and federal stakeholders.

### ■ California Watershed Council

The California Resources Agency and the California Environmental Protection Agency signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on April 28, 2003 for the "Watershed, Clean Beaches, and Water Quality Act, Integrated Watershed Management Program". This MOU was required by AB 2534 (Pavley) and its purpose was to:

- Establish a statewide partnership and framework for improved integration and coordination of watershed policies, funding, and program implementation.
- Specify the responsibilities of the State agencies in support of this partnership and framework.
- Specify processes for stakeholder participation in this partnership, framework, and watershed decision-making.

The MOU directed the Agencies to establish the California Watershed Council (CWC) as an advisory body to the Agency Secretaries. The CWC will advise the Secretaries on priorities, strategies, and improvements to watershed programs, including grant funding programs (e.g. programs under Proposition 40).

## Mission and Vision

- Our mission is:
  - To protect and improve California's watersheds by coordinating State resources and working collaboratively with all residents of the State.
- Our vision is to have:
  - Healthy watersheds that will enhance the State's natural resources and provide economic, social and environmental benefits for generations of Californians.

### *Operating Principles*

This Watershed Management Strategic Plan is founded on principles that support strong relationships among State agencies and between the State and other (e.g. local and federal) watershed stakeholders. The Plan moves the State towards a collaborative approach for State agency involvement in watershed management in California. Our principles define how we will strive to do business differently as we interact with stakeholders and make decisions in the future. We recognize that these operating principles may not reflect how we conduct ourselves today; however, we are committed to practicing them. We will use these principles to guide our actions, test them over time, and update them as appropriate in order to improve our effectiveness in watershed protection and improvement.

Supporting watershed management requires that state agencies conduct their affairs somewhat differently than in the past. To this end the State will:

- Articulate and communicate the State's interests, goals, and objectives for watersheds. These interests include those identified in the Environmental Goals and Policy Report (i.e. promote infill developments, protect working landscapes, and encourage efficient development patterns).
- Work with local communities and other stakeholders to develop and promote a collaborative vision for watersheds. Support and participate in collaborative efforts between State and local interests to develop innovative solutions for local watersheds.
- Support the development of organizational capacity and long-term viability of local watershed groups. Initiate more integration and flexibility across and within departments and with local watershed groups in support of watershed assessment, planning, restoration, and management.
- Develop and implement State policies, approaches, and programs using watershed boundaries as appropriate. Support both watershed preservation and restoration activities and coordinate the State's watershed approach with natural resource management.
- Track and report on the achievement of the State's watershed management goals and objectives with local input. Encourage the use of a consistent set of environmental

indicators that are developed with stakeholder input to report results in local watersheds

- Administer and coordinate state programs to support multiple rather than single state goals and priorities whenever possible.

## ***Summary of Goals and Initiatives***

### **Goals**

- Goal 1: State Agency Coordination/Collaboration
  - Increase efficiency, eliminate redundancy, and reduce conflict among State agencies that participate in assessing, protecting, restoring, and managing watersheds in the state
- Goal 2: Demonstrate improvement in watershed health
  - Improve collection, assessment, management, and distribution of data
- Goal 3: Collective Investment
  - Increase program effectiveness and sustainability by leveraging State, federal and local resources
- Goal 4: Local Involvement
  - Increase local involvement in watershed issues and long-term public involvement in local watersheds (two-way exchange)

### **Initiatives which will support the Goals**

- Goal 1: State Agency Coordination/Collaboration
  - 1) State Agency Watershed Management Governance Framework
  - 2) Program Service Delivery
  - 2a) Regulatory Coordination
- Goal 2: Demonstrate improvement in watershed health
  - 3) Data Collection and Management
  - 4) Assessment of Results
  - 5) Communicating Results
  - 6) Single Point of Entry to State Watershed Data and Services
- Goal 3: Collective Investment
  - 7) Funding
  - 8) Technical Assistance

- 9) Investment in Science
- Goal 4: Local Involvement
  - 10) Education and Outreach
  - 11) Development and Implementation of Local Watershed Management Plans

## ***Strategic Plan Implementation***

### **Introduction**

- Implementation Timeline
  - The California Agency Watershed Management Strategic Plan will be implemented over a three to five year period. During this time, the strategic plan initiatives will be implemented based on resource availability. The initiative implementation path depicted on the following page presents a suggested timeline. Initiatives are represented according to goal. Dependencies between initiatives are represented with connecting lines. Some initiatives will be implemented in phases as represented in the implementation path.
- Implementation Process
  - Co-sponsors for each initiative will be identified and held accountable for bringing together a team of State, local and federal stakeholders responsible for implementing each initiative. (See Appendix E Governance Framework for more information). Initiative teams will:
    - » Operate under a team charter
    - » Identify and obtain resources needed to support initiative implementation
    - » Refine initiative scope, objectives, and deliverables as appropriate
    - » Achieve initiative objectives
    - » Prepare initiative deliverables
    - » Identify solutions, present recommendations, and report progress to the California Watershed Council and the Secretaries of the Resources Agency and the California Environmental Protection Agency who are responsible for overseeing the successful implementation of the Strategic Plan
- Tracking and Reporting Process
  - The State Watershed Management Strategic Plan Implementation Steering Committee will be responsible for monitoring performance related to initiative implementation. Initiative teams will provide the Steering Committee with reports regarding their progress. The Steering Committee will also be responsible for ensuring these teams report on the measures associated with their initiative and associated Goal. (See Appendix E: Governance Framework for more information)

## **Scheduled starting dates for Initiatives (proposed)**

### **■ Year 1 and Year 2 Initiatives**

- ☐ Initiative 1 - State Agency Watershed Management Governance Framework
- ☐ Initiative 2 - Program Service Delivery
- ☐ Initiative 7 - Coordinate Inter-Agency and Intra-Agency Funding

### **■ Evaluate Progress and then set the Priorities for the Remaining Initiatives**

### **■ Year 3 and Beyond Initiatives**

- ☐ Initiative 2a - Regulatory Coordination
- ☐ Initiative 3 - Data Collection and Management
- ☐ Initiative 4 - Assessment of Results
- ☐ Initiative 5 - Communicating Results
- ☐ Initiative 6 - Single Point of Entry to State Watershed Data and Services\*
- ☐ Initiative 8 - Technical Assistance
- ☐ Initiative 9 - Investment in Science
- ☐ Initiative 10 - Education and Outreach
- ☐ Initiative 11 - Development and Successful Implementation of Local Watershed Management Plans

\* Parts of Initiative 6 (e.g. ability to deposit or obtain data) will be started in Year 1.



## Goal 1: State Agency Coordination/Collaboration

Increase efficiency, eliminate redundancy, and reduce conflict among State agencies that participate in assessing, protecting, restoring, and managing watersheds in the state.

### **Objectives** (Measurable Targets, Specific Results to be Achieved)

- ☐ Generate a paradigm shift in the way Agencies approach watershed management (coordinated vs. unilateral approaches)
- ☐ Ensure State decisions are based on up-to-date inter-agency data and sound science
- ☐ Ensure State Agency watershed management decisions are made using information from existing inter/intra-Agency advisory bodies
- ☐ Increase the consistency in how State Agencies approach watershed management
- ☐ Ensure relevant State, federal and local stakeholders are involved early in the process

### **Strategies** (High Level Actions and Approaches)

- ☐ Coordinate Agency watershed activities by participating with local interests to establish needed priorities for specific watersheds
- ☐ Reorganize state activities according to watershed boundaries as appropriate
- ☐ Clearly communicate a consistent message to all stakeholders
- ☐ Acknowledge the uniqueness of each watershed
- ☐ Address inter/intra-Agency conflict before interacting with local stakeholders

### **Initiatives** (Significant Long-Term Cross-Organizational Efforts)

- ☐ **1. State Agency Watershed Management Governance Framework** - Create a forum(s) that provides leadership, provides a vehicle to share information, provides guidance to state departments' watershed direction, and monitors state watershed initiative results
- ☐ **2. Program Service Delivery** - Determine whether Agency departments and programs are organized appropriately to deliver watershed programs effectively and efficiently. Address barriers that may be inhibiting our success.
- ☐ **2a. Regulatory Coordination** – Ensure that agency regulatory programs are coordinated with other regulatory programs and with non-regulatory agency programs to support watershed restoration, protection, and management.

### **Performance Measures** (additional to be added later)

We will measure progress related to implementation of this goal's objectives, strategies and initiatives by assessing whether the State has:

1. Increased cooperation and coordination among Agencies at the State Department Level and the local regional level demonstrated by:
  - Decisions being made by the Strategic Plan Implementation Steering Committee that are adopted and adhere to

- Recommendations being made by the Initiative Teams that are being approved by the Steering Committee
2. Reduced duplication among Agencies within local regions demonstrated by:
- Improved multi-Agency staffing in local regions
  - Feedback from stakeholders working with local regional staff that duplication has been reduced in specific areas (need to define areas based on staffing/organizational decisions that have been made)

## **Initiative 1: State Agency Watershed Management Governance Framework**

**Scope:** Create a forum(s) that provides leadership, shares information, guides watershed approaches used by departments and agencies, and monitors state watershed initiative results.

### **Project Tasks**

- ❑ Build the decision-making framework around existing watershed management coordination teams
- ❑ Agree on a common set of topographic watershed boundaries all Agencies can use
- ❑ Work jointly with Agencies and with local stakeholders to develop watershed planning unit boundaries that meet local and State needs
- ❑ Incorporate watershed management approaches in State agency planning, prioritization and implementation efforts
- ❑ Use watershed management principles developed with input from the local stakeholders to help guide State agency decision-making
- ❑ Improve coordination and implementation among State program watershed management elements including: regulation, land acquisition, project implementation, education and outreach, data
- ❑ Define criteria by which program priorities will be established
- ❑ Identify shared Agency priorities for selected watersheds (e.g., land acquisition, projects, etc.) so that healthy, functioning, restored, and restorable watersheds are recognized and protected throughout the State

### **Deliverables**

- ❑ Evaluation of existing watershed governance structures and forums
- ❑ A framework supported by staff resources that: a) helps inform and assist/influence State Department decision-making and facilitates conflict resolution; b) helps track State department performance related to watershed work to influence continuous improvement and adaptive management; c) provides a venue through which the State expresses its interests; d) facilitates the evaluation of on the ground

monitoring results and determines whether what we think is happening is in fact happening in watersheds ; and e) clearly defines where public input fits into the framework (e.g., as equals at the table or as advisors)

- ❑ A Forum that encourages broad participation, in which an overview occurs across programs, departments, and agencies (e.g., Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee - 28 organizations working together on Nonpoint Source (NPS) and Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project)
- ❑ MOUs that provide guidelines and agreements on how we proceed - expresses philosophy of the State

## **Initiative 2: Program Service Delivery**

**Scope:** Determine whether Agency departments and programs are organized appropriately to deliver watershed programs effectively and efficiently. Address barriers that may be inhibiting our success.

### **Project Tasks**

- ❑ Share best practices and lessons learned
- ❑ Implement processes that ensure staff work more collaboratively and improve working relationships across Agencies
- ❑ Consistently implement the distinct roles and responsibilities for State Agencies within each watershed (e.g., through MOUs and program workplans)
- ❑ Educate Agency staff about: 1) the benefits of using a watershed approach and 2) the interests and responsibilities of other State Agencies
- ❑ Support adaptive management
- ❑ Improve data information exchange (e.g. make grant and program information available to grant applicants and agency program staff)
- ❑ Provide easy public access to watershed programs in the various departments (e.g., single point of entry into the network of watershed programs)
- ❑ Further coordinate delivery of State watershed programs to accomplish goals specified in the AB 2117 report (AB 2117 Rec #16)

### **Deliverables**

- ❑ A report addressing what specifically needs improvement and recommendations for improvement related to: a) Processes inside and across organizations where functions and services are performed and b) how funding of Agencies and their programs impacts watershed approaches
  - ❑ Include recommendations from stakeholders on how we can fix things
- ❑ Pilot projects potentially including the following:
  - ❑ Assign regional watershed coordinators with multi-agency team management authority and responsibility for facilitating and coordinating State activities at the local level

- ❑ Establish regional teams and/or co-locate staff at the regional level to leverage resources and facilitate planning and communication efforts
- ❑ Develop networks that provide opportunities for increased interagency cooperation
- ❑ Conflict resolution process to address issues between/among agencies working in a watershed

## **Initiative 2a: Regulatory Coordination**

**Scope:** Ensure that agency regulatory programs are coordinated with other regulatory programs and with non-regulatory agency programs to support watershed restoration, protection, and management

### **Project Tasks**

- ❑ Coordinate regulatory programs at the watershed level to ensure that restoration activities can proceed more rapidly and effectively
- ❑ Coordinate agency funding programs with agency regulatory programs to ensure the best use of limited State funds
- ❑ Proactively coordinate State regulatory processes (e.g., TMDLs) and schedules in watersheds where local voluntary partnerships are underway (AB2117 Rec #12)
- ❑ Improve coordination of the State's permitting processes to facilitate timely approval of watershed restoration projects

### **Deliverables**

- ❑ A report listing the key State regulatory programs that need to be coordinated at the watershed level (e.g. Endangered species protection, streambed alteration and wetlands protection, TMDLs, Waste Discharge Requirements, and NPDES permits). The report will specify the key regulatory and reporting requirements applicable to local watershed management activities.
- ❑ Streamlined permit processes

### **Performance Measures** (to be added later)

## ***Goal 2: Demonstrate Improvement in Watershed Health***

Improve collection, assessment, management and distribution of data

### **Objectives** (Measurable Targets, Specific Results to be Achieved)

- ❑ Define measurable success indicators that will demonstrate achievement of watershed goals

- ❑ Ensure indicator data is collected by state agencies or local entities
- ❑ Increase the accessibility of watershed data for state, federal and local stakeholders
- ❑ Increase the consistency and breadth of data collected for each watershed
- ❑ Provide stakeholders with demonstrable results of watershed efforts

## **Strategies** (High Level Actions and Approaches)

- ❑ Ensure State agencies and federal and local stakeholders understand their respective roles and responsibilities
- ❑ Increase support for mutual planning, assessment and project implementation
  - ❑ Facilitate sharing of best practices and successful models applied in local watersheds between state and local stakeholders
- ❑ Develop a universal tracking and reporting system for watershed data

## **Initiatives** (Significant Long-Term Cross-Organizational Efforts)

- ❑ **3. Data Collection and Management** - Ensure processes and procedures are in place to facilitate the capture, analysis, control and storage of quality data (inform State government about the outcome of its actions and investments)
- ❑ **4. Assessment of Results** - Ensure a process is in place that facilitates the assessment of data to improve watershed health
- ❑ **5. Communicating Results** - Expand avenues and establish protocols for communicating results of watershed management efforts and the tools available to assess efforts
- ❑ **6. Single Point of Entry to State Watershed Data and Services** - Develop and promote a State watershed website (portal) that provides stakeholders with a single point of entry and easy access to available watershed data and services

## **Performance Measures** (to be added later)

### **Initiative 3: Data Collection and Management**

**Scope:** Ensure processes and procedures are in place to facilitate the capture, analysis, control and storage of quality data (inform State government about the outcome of its actions and investments)

#### **Project Tasks**

- ❑ Develop common data collection methods and standard reporting requirements
- ❑ Ensure multiple parties collect data in a manner that meets agreed upon quality and compatibility standards
- ❑ Collectively decide on relevant data to gather, taking into account how we can present data in a way people can use it

- ❑ Increase the trust in data collection by local stakeholders, demonstrated by increased use of local data by State Agencies
- ❑ Increase the trust in data collection cross-Agency, demonstrated by increased use of cross-Agency data by Agencies
- ❑ Incorporate locally collected data into State data collection systems (this will be a difficult objective to meet however, it is important to our success - we have to recognize and address the issues)
  - ❑ Look at the Interagency Ecological Program (IEP) for the Bay Delta
- ❑ Ensure data can be shared amongst compatible systems
- ❑ Clarify roles and responsibilities related to data collection
- ❑ Coordinate with existing state and federal standards and tool sets
- ❑ Ensure data collection efforts are commensurate with project scale and resource availability (e.g., small creek vs. Bay Delta)

### **Deliverables**

- ❑ Cross-Agency written data collection quality compatibility standards
- ❑ Communication plan for compatibility standards (i.e., Establish the communication plan that provides the continuous feedback and sharing of conditions)
- ❑ Recommendation regarding the validity of having government collecting data
- ❑ Assessment of data collection resources and recommendations for addressing gaps
- ❑ Process for measuring use and application of standards
- ❑ Confirmation that individual state programs have the authority to provide funds for adaptive management and monitoring
- ❑ Statewide data architecture for the State's watershed programs
- ❑ Common statewide standards and tools for data collection that can be customized to local watershed needs
- ❑ Data collection and reporting component in all State grants supporting project implementation
- ❑ Data source/repositories that are available to those analyzing results, including data on success of grant programs, watershed programs, watershed indicators, and GIS

## **Initiative 4: Assessment of Results**

**Scope:** Ensure a process is in place that facilitates the assessment of data to improve watershed health

### **Project Tasks**

- ❑ Generate more buy-in on the use of Environmental Indicators (e.g., EPIC)
- ❑ Determine whether data is being collected in enough places that allows us to assess results
- ❑ Given limited resources, identify the priorities for data collection that allow us to determine the health of watersheds
- ❑ Determine how we can effectively use the data we have
- ❑ Obtain agreement on what we are all (collectively) trying to assess

- ❑ Determine whether there is a scientific approach that can improve assessment
- ❑ Agree on common watershed health and scientific metrics for the State's watersheds

### **Deliverables**

- ❑ Methodology for integrating the variety of measures used to assess watersheds
- ❑ Report summarizing where data is collected and assessing whether it allows us to assess results
  - ❑ Is the data sufficient to identify the problems/issues?
- ❑ Recommendations regarding appropriate measures that can be used to assess individual watersheds and supports an adaptive management approach, including the qualitative measures
- ❑ Required reporting on the status of watersheds
- ❑ Defined roles and responsibilities among state, federal, and local stakeholders related to data analysis
- ❑ Agreement regarding benchmarks that can be used to assess intermediate progress
- ❑ Reporting process for the State on the health of watersheds
- ❑ Critical indicators that locals can use to evaluate the health of their watershed

## **Initiative 5: Communicating Results**

**Scope:** Expand avenues and establish protocols for communicating results of watershed management efforts and the tools available to assess efforts.

### **Project Tasks**

- ❑ Improve communication among those managing watersheds (e.g., acquisition, restoration, enhancement of watershed resources) regarding successes and failures
- ❑ Assess communication forums used to date
- ❑ Determine how data can best be presented so people can use it
- ❑ Understand target audiences

### **Deliverables**

- ❑ Assessment of communication forums used to date
- ❑ Process to assess how effectively we are communicating
- ❑ Develop communication system that is supportive of adaptive management
- ❑ Develop mechanisms to receive feedback on assessments that support adaptive management
  - ❑ Build into normal course of business
- ❑ Develop regional reports on the status of management in watersheds
  - ❑ Agree on a consistent definition for regions
- ❑ Examples of good visuals and clear messages that are appropriate for a wide variety of audiences and communicate results clearly

- ❑ Mechanisms and processes for communicating results (e.g., media, college campus programs, Web links with local sites, watershed network, business associations, Agriculture Commission, Farm Bureau)
- ❑ Forums for reporting to/communicating with stakeholders
  - ❑ Document results of collective efforts
  - ❑ Share effective/proven practices
  - ❑ Address failures
  - ❑ Identify new solutions

## **Initiative 6: Single Point of Entry to State Watershed Data and Services**

**Scope:** Develop and promote a State watershed website (portal) that provides stakeholders with a single point of entry and easy access to available watershed data and services

### **Project Tasks**

- ❑ Assess existing websites and data repository systems [e.g. California Environmental Resources Evaluation System (CERES)]
- ❑ Designate/revamp websites to assist both agency staff and the public
- ❑ Provide stakeholders with easy access to current and consistent watershed indicators (or metrics) and trend data
- ❑ Provide access to related watershed websites (other states, federal, local)
- ❑ Reduce the amount of time needed to respond to data requests
- ❑ Increase access to services (grant applications, permits, etc.)
- ❑ Improve design of CERES to improve watershed information postings and links to other websites

### **Deliverables**

- ❑ Strategy supporting deployment of State Agency information and services over the Internet
- ❑ Website security strategy and specifications
- ❑ Website implementation plan
- ❑ Designated resources to support the website (e.g., funding, facilities, infrastructure, and support staff)
- ❑ Website deployment phase I - information posted on a website with links to other websites
- ❑ Website deployment phase II - ability to deposit data or obtain data from databases, obtain and submit permit applications, obtain and submit grant applications using the website



### ***Goal 3: Collective Investment***

Increase program effectiveness and sustainability by leveraging State, federal and local resources.

#### **Objectives** (Measurable Targets, Specific Results to be Achieved)

- ☐ Increase the effectiveness of public and private partnerships to provide on-the-ground improvements to watersheds
- ☐ Ensure a collaborative process is in place to facilitate the leveraging of resources among Agencies and programs
- ☐ Adopt watershed management as a part of doing business and encourage private sector partners to do the same
- ☐ Ensure State funding addresses identified state, federal and local priorities that achieve the State's goals
- ☐ Increase the long-term viability of local watershed partnerships
- ☐ Increase the scientific knowledge and tools available to support watershed management

#### **Strategies** (High Level Actions and Approaches)

- ☐ Incorporate and act on local expertise in State watershed programs
- ☐ Leverage public and private resources
- ☐ Seek out and promote participation of all critical stakeholders in local watershed partnerships
- ☐ Work collaboratively to ensure watershed organizations have the tools needed to be successful (e.g., leveraged funding, technical support, etc.)
- ☐ Provide staff and funding resources to support the development of effective partnerships
- ☐ Facilitate the integration of watershed management in local land use planning efforts
- ☐ Facilitate the integration of watershed management in State planning efforts
- ☐ Promote administrative and legislative initiatives (e.g., incentives and taxes) that encourage watershed management

#### **Initiatives** (Significant Long-Term Cross-Organizational Efforts)

- ☐ **7. Funding** - Coordinate inter-agency and intra-agency funding activities so that the State can collaboratively and innovatively fund and encourage projects on a watershed scale
- ☐ **8. Technical Assistance** - Ensure agencies have the capacity to provide technical assistance watershed partnerships are requesting. Make state technical assistance available to local partnerships
- ☐ **9. Investment in Science** - Support and coordinate applied scientific and technical studies to improve understanding of watershed functions and restoration processes (e.g., hydrology and geology studies)

#### ***Performance Measures*** (additional to be added later)

We will measure progress related to implementation of this goal's objectives, strategies and initiatives by assessing whether the State has:

1. Improved coordination among State funding agencies demonstrated by:
  - Decrease in the amount of time between RFP release and contract finalization
  - Positive feedback from State grant decision-making staff
  - Positive feedback from grant requestors
2. Increased the amount of quality data available related to State funding activities and funded project outcomes demonstrated by:
  - Improved tracking and reporting systems available to capture data.
  - Increase in the amount of quality data available this year vs. the previous year
  - Improved reports to the legislature and other stakeholders regarding State funding activities
3. Furthered State goals through grant making activities demonstrated by:
  - Outcomes achieved by grant recipients

## **Initiative 7 Funding**

**Scope:** Coordinate inter-agency and intra-agency funding activities so that the State can fund and encourage projects on a watershed scale (State is asking its Agencies to have collaborative interactive funding processes)

### **Project Tasks**

- ❑ Ensure we do not reduce flexibility to allocate funding (e.g., be careful about funding according to watershed boundaries)
- ❑ Ensure the greatest impact on watershed improvement through consolidated joint funding efforts
  - ❑ Provide funding of local watershed partnerships for a sufficient period of time to accomplish results
  - ❑ Ensure collective funding efforts of local watershed partnerships generate successful local projects
- ❑ Reduce the confusion posed by the multitude of grant processes
- ❑ Reduce fragmentation of State funding programs by coordinating across Agencies to set regional priorities and develop user friendly grant administration
- ❑ Integrate diverse interests in the grant application process
- ❑ Decrease the complexity of State grant applications and contracts and simplify across State agencies the ability to apply for and receive grant funding
- ❑ Eliminate unnecessary time delays due to process
- ❑ Ensure State grant funding supports planning, organizational development, monitoring activities, and the hiring of technical assistance
- ❑ Provide long-term State funding to ensure the viability of individual local projects
- ❑ Encourage the leveraging of diverse funding sources (i.e., federal, local, private)

- ❑ Ensure state coordinates distribution of grant funds to projects with local watershed plans and priorities
- ❑ Ensure the State has an incentive based funding program for developing and sustaining watershed councils
- ❑ Emphasize regional level prioritization and administration of State funding programs where these efforts are not already existing
- ❑ Incorporate criteria into state funding programs, where possible, to promote projects that support multiple state objectives rather than single state objectives

### **Deliverables**

- ❑ Accountability measures for recipients of current or future State funding for local watershed efforts (AB 2117 Rec 18)
- ❑ Funding awarded to voluntary watershed restoration and enhancement projects that use available principles, guidelines or watershed assessments developed by the State where these are available (AB 2117 Rec 19)
- ❑ An interagency grant review process and supporting infrastructure
- ❑ Streamlined grant contracting process
- ❑ Increased amount of State grant funding devoted to planning and organizational development activities (AB 2117 Rec #15)
- ❑ Increased amount of State grant funding devoted to monitoring (AB 2117 Rec 15)
- ❑ Regional-level workshops on available watershed management grant programs for potential grant applications that are tailored to each region (AB 2117 Rec 11)

## **Initiative 8: Technical Assistance**

**Scope:** Ensure agencies have the capacity to provide the technical assistance that watershed partnerships are requesting (e.g. facilitation, project management, organizational development, networking, planning, restoration methods, consulting in science and engineering, regulatory assistance).

### **Project Tasks**

- ❑ Ensure a mechanism is in place to capture and process requests for technical assistance
- ❑ Develop interagency technical assistance teams to collaborate with watershed partnerships
- ❑ Recognize staff for pursuing innovative approaches in collaboration with watershed partnerships (AB 2117 Rec 6 revised)
- ❑ Provide State staff with the training they need to effectively support local efforts (e.g., facilitation, project management, organizational development, conflict resolution)

- ❑ Create and support regional or sub-regional forums for multiple watershed efforts, or large scale basin efforts, in order to effectively communicate and encourage larger scale planning
- ❑ Provide State staff with the time they need to participate in local watershed activities
- ❑ Maintain a common set of guidance documents that help communicate State accepted approaches and techniques for watershed assessment, planning, and monitoring activities (AB 2117 Rec 6 revised)

### **Deliverables**

- ❑ Job descriptions that incorporate working with local watershed partnerships
- ❑ Recognition and reward system for staff
- ❑ Provide a regional coordinator who acts as the formal link between local efforts and State staff as well as provide local efforts with a regional and statewide perspective
- ❑ Training plan for staff working to support local efforts
- ❑ Provide local stakeholders with training they need to be successful
- ❑ Establish or co-sponsor core training courses for watershed partnerships in which department personnel and/or non-governmental organizations provide instruction in:  
a) organizational development, strategic planning membership development and involvement; b) watershed planning and assessment; and c) ecological restoration design, construction methods and monitoring (AB 2117 Rec 10)

## **Initiative 9: Investment in Science**

**Scope:** Support and coordinate applied scientific and technical studies to improve understanding of watershed functions and restoration processes (e.g., hydrology and geology studies) (AB 2117 Rec #16b)

### **Project Tasks**

- ❑ Ensure private sector supports these efforts
- ❑ Focus on watersheds that are lacking in data
- ❑ Ensure agencies make public the status and outcomes of their applied work
- ❑ Partner with universities and private foundations to obtain more applied research grants (thus increasing the amount of applied research conducted)
- ❑ Ensure staff are aware of existing studies and future research agenda
- ❑ Organize watershed restoration practitioner community to facilitate exchange of information on scientific and restoration methods

### **Deliverables**

- ❑ Increased research funding for universities
- ❑ Additional data and tools that support adaptive watershed management
- ❑ Increased support from students and professors to conduct research

- ❑ Science advisory body responsible for developing a common research agenda and coordinating research projects across agencies
- ❑ Continuing education forums

#### ***Goal 4: Local Involvement***

Increase local involvement in watershed issues and long-term public involvement in local watersheds (two-way exchange)

#### ***Objectives (Measurable Targets, Specific Results to be Achieved)***

- ❑ Support local communities in their efforts to address watershed issues
- ❑ Increase local watershed education and outreach activities
- ❑ Ensure relevant State, federal and local stakeholders are involved early in the process
- ❑ Incorporate and act on local expertise in State programs

#### ***Strategies (High Level Actions and Approaches)***

- ❑ Develop and implement statewide watershed public education and outreach campaigns throughout the State
- ❑ Assist local watershed stakeholders in the development and implementation of local watershed management plans
- ❑ Increase volunteer monitoring programs
- ❑ Develop partnerships with local experts
- ❑ Ensure stakeholders are informed of State Agencies' priorities (e.g., the State needs comprehensive, locally developed watershed management plans)

#### ***Initiatives (Significant Long-Term Cross-Organizational Efforts)***

- ❑ **10. Education and Outreach** - Develop a statewide watershed public education and outreach program that may be customized to meet local needs
- ❑ **11. Development and Implementation of Local Watershed Management Plans** - Provide resources (staff, time, funding) for integrated multi-objective watershed management planning and project implementation

### **Performance Measures** (to be added later)

## **Initiative 10: Education and Outreach**

**Scope:** Develop a statewide watershed public education and outreach program that may be customized to meet local needs

### **Project Tasks**

- ❑ Coordinate existing public education and outreach program activities
- ❑ Incorporate media channels in distribution of information to the public
- ❑ Develop a relationship with the business community
  - ❑ Focus attention on development of education and outreach tools similar to the Chesapeake Bay program (media)

- ❑ Share technical expertise between public and private watershed practitioners
- ❑ Involve local watershed stakeholders in government decision-making that affects their watershed (e.g., setting priorities, distributing grants, program development, etc.)

#### **Deliverables**

- ❑ Forums and opportunities for local stakeholders to communicate and educate government officials and staff
  - ❑ Workshops on watershed management and restoration for public and private
- ❑ Compendium of curricula on watershed management (set of lesson plans for a subject area)
- ❑ Public forums on watershed management (e.g., Blue Circles)
- ❑ Innovative outreach and education pilot programs (e.g., Chesapeake Bay Watershed Watch - i.e., use of media)

### **Initiative 11: Development and Implementation of Local Watershed Management Plans**

**Scope:** Provide resources (staff, time, funding) for integrated multi-objective watershed management planning and project implementation

#### **Project Tasks**

- ❑ Encourage the development of a quality plan in each watershed (plans should be multi-objective and include land use, habitat protection, water quality, etc.)
- ❑ Provide staff support and grant funding to help facilitate assessment and planning efforts
- ❑ Work with local decision-makers to implement watershed plans and priorities
- ❑ Increase reliance on watershed plans for implementation of projects

#### **Deliverables**

- ❑ A set of common elements for watershed management plans
- ❑ A process for evaluating contents of plans and supporting development of plans
  - ❑ A state taskforce of watershed partnerships and agencies to drive the planning
- ❑ State coordinated funding allocated to support local watershed planning projects
- ❑ State coordinated technical assistance to support local watershed planning projects and implementation of plans

## *APPENDICES*

### *Appendix A: Strategic Plan Background*

#### **Purpose**

Based on the findings of the AB2117 Report, State Agency Directors asked representative Department Deputy Directors to come together and initiate the development of the Strategic Plan (see Appendix B for list of Steering Committee members). It is hoped that this cross-Agency planning process will initiate changes required to address the issues identified during interviews with local stakeholders during the preparation of the AB2117 Report. This planning process is focused on breaking down the silos (compartmentalized programs) within and across State Agencies that inhibit the most effective and efficient delivery of services to local watershed stakeholders. This Strategic Plan is being developed in order to improve processes within/between State agencies; doing so will help improve watershed management services to local watershed stakeholders.

#### *Key Strategic Issues*

The following is a synthesis of the key strategic issues identified in the AB 2117 Report and during interviews with Agency leadership, managers, and watershed management staff. These key strategic issues have been grouped into the following categories:

- **Lack of Coordination Among Agencies** - Lack of coordination among State agencies has been caused by differing watershed management approaches, ineffective communication among agency staff, uncoordinated funding activities, lack of accountability, and unclear roles and responsibilities.
- **Incomplete Data** - Incomplete data has been caused by the lack of coordinated data, insufficient scientific tools, insufficient and untrained data collection resources, and conflicting data collection methods and tools.
- **Lack of Accountability (Clear Results)** - Lack of accountability has been caused by the inability to fulfill local watershed management plans, unclear local roles and responsibilities vs. those of the State, and insufficient tools to support assessment of and communication of results in local watersheds.
- **Insufficient Support for Local Agencies** - Insufficient support for local agencies has been caused by insufficient State technical assistance, complex grant funding processes and limited funding support for planning and organizational development activities, limited education and outreach, and weak coordination/partnership activities.

## Appendix B: Steering Committee Members and Staff

### ■ Cal/EPA

- ❑ Loretta Barsamian, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 2
- ❑ Tom Howard, State Water Resources Control Board
- ❑ Beth Jines, Cal/EPA (Co-Chair)
- ❑ Doug Okumura, Department of Pesticide Regulation
- ❑ Ann Riley, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 2
- ❑ Harold Singer, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 6

### ■ Resources Agency

- ❑ Bill Berry, Department of Parks and Recreation
- ❑ Neil Fishman, Coastal Conservancy
- ❑ Diana Jacobs, Department of Fish and Game
- ❑ Ross Johnson\*, Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
- ❑ Patti Keating, California Conservation Corps
- ❑ Al Wanger and Jaime Kooser\*, California Coastal Commission
- ❑ Georgia Liphardt\*, Wildlife Conservation Board
- ❑ John Lowrie, CALFED
- ❑ Jonas Minton, Department of Water Resources
- ❑ Luree Stetson, Resources Agency (Co-Chair)

## Project Core Team Members

### ■ Cal/EPA

- ❑ Meriah Arias\*, Cal/EPA
- ❑ Ken Coulter, State Water Resources Control Board
- ❑ Tom Howard, State Water Resources Control Board
- ❑ Beth Jines, Cal/EPA (Co-Chair)
- ❑ Margie Lopez Read, State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Water Quality
- ❑ Jim Sutton, State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Water Rights

### ■ Resources Agency

- ❑ Renee Hoyos, Resources Agency
- ❑ Stefan Lorenzato, Department of Water Resources
- ❑ Cathy Bleier, Resources Agency
- ❑ Luree Stetson, Resources Agency (Co-Chair)

### ■ Gartner, Inc.

- ❑ Phoebe Cameron
- ❑ Josetta Bull

\* Have since retired or changed jobs



## **Appendix C: Strategic Planning Process and Definitions**

### **Strategic Planning Process**

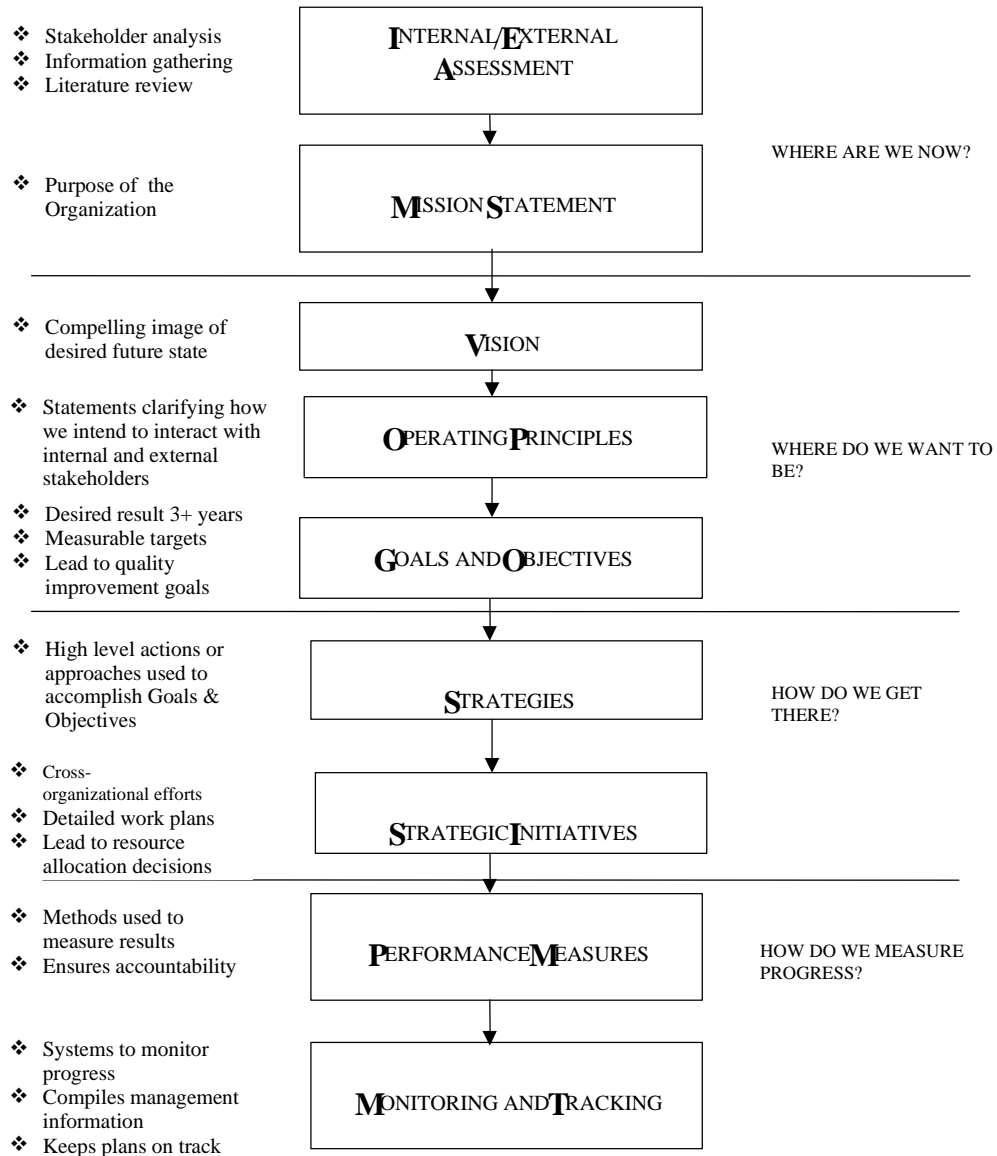
#### ■ Strategic Planning Methodology

- Definitions and Planning - The methodology used to develop this strategic plan is outlined below. Strategic Plan definitions are also provided below.
- Data Gathering - This strategic planning process relied heavily on the data gathered through interviews and surveys with local stakeholders during the development of the AB2117 report. In addition to this data, interviews were conducted with department heads, department managers, state watershed management program staff, public officials, community leaders and representatives of watershed groups.
- Developing the Strategic Plan Elements - The Steering Committee has conducted six meetings during which it has prepared the draft Strategic Plan Elements found within this document. The Steering Committee has been supported with staff work prepared by the Strategic Planning Core Team (see Appendix B for list of members) which has met to develop and refine draft elements in preparation for each Steering Committee meeting.

#### ■ Local Involvement

- The Steering Committee received feedback from watershed stakeholders to ensure the initial draft elements addressed local stakeholder concerns regarding the State's need to improve its service delivery and support for local efforts.
- The final Strategic Plan will be implemented with local stakeholders participating in the governance process responsible for implementing the Strategic Plan (see Appendix E), participating in the development of solutions as part of initiatives, and monitoring results associated with project implementation.

## Strategic Planning Definitions



## *Performance Measure Definitions*

### ■ Long-Term Measures (Outcomes)

- ☐ Outcomes answer the question “so what?”
- ☐ Outcomes are measured on an annual basis
- ☐ Outcomes are measured by input provided by third parties (e.g., through surveys)

### ■ Short-Term Measures (Indicators)

- ☐ Indicators measure the results of activities that lead to achievement of outcomes
- ☐ Indicators are measured on a frequent basis (e.g., monthly or quarterly)
- ☐ Organizations change strategies and initiatives based on indicator results

### ■ Short-Term Measures (Outputs)

- ☐ Demonstrate the amount of work accomplished
- ☐ Quantitative in nature

## Appendix D: Definitions of Watershed and Watershed Management

### **Watershed:**

An area of land in which water drains to a particular area along a waterway such as a river, lake or the ocean. The watershed includes the land, river or stream system, and the complete ecological setting including the interdependence of animate and inanimate elements of the geographical area. Not only does a watershed drain, it also captures precipitation, filters and stores water, and determines its release. A watershed, therefore, is a drainage basin that divides the landscape into hydrologically defined areas.

A watershed is made up of inter-related biotic and abiotic components. Watersheds can be large or small. Every waterway (stream, tributary, etc) has an associated watershed, and smaller watersheds join together to become larger watersheds. Watershed boundaries can be delineated using a topographical map that shows stream channels, drainage systems, land elevation, and roadways. Surface water moves downstream in a watershed. Any activity that affects water quality, quantity, or rate of movement at one location, therefore, can change the characteristics of the watershed at locations downstream. Cooperation and knowledge of off-site effects are key components to help assure healthy watershed conditions.

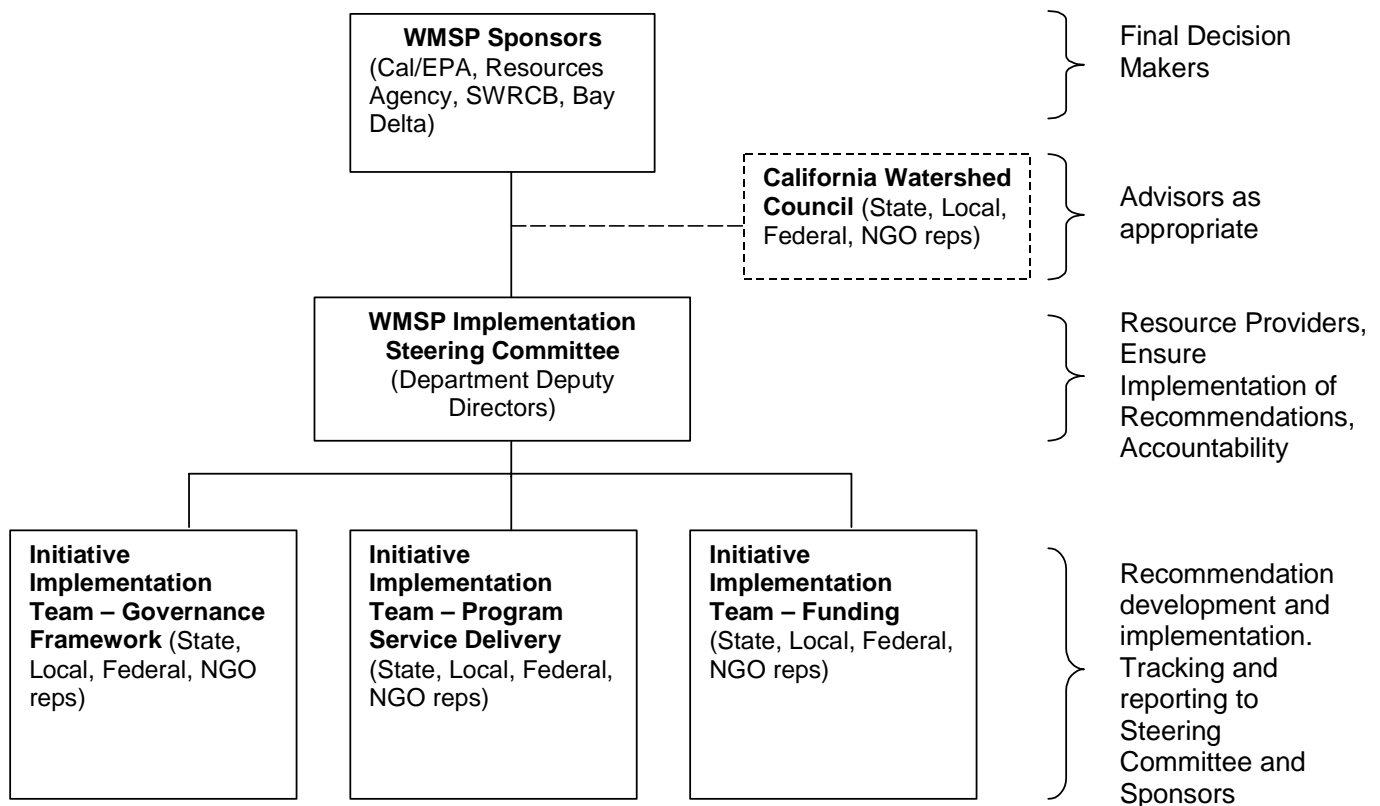
### **Watershed Management:**

Watershed management is the process of evaluating, planning, restoring and organizing land and other resource use within a watershed to provide desired goods and services while maintaining a sustainable ecosystem. This process provides a chance for agencies and stakeholders to balance diverse goals and uses for environmental resources, and to consider how their cumulative actions may affect long-term sustainability of these resources. Watershed management protects the public trust, preserves ecological functions and processes, provides for safe and healthy communities and is viewed from a geographic scale that reflects watershed or drainage boundaries. Watershed management is also marked by stewardship and a process of interaction that invites interested parties to participate, is respectful and tolerant of diverse views, and seeks to satisfy many needs of the participating community and the people that various interests represent.

## Appendix E: Strategic Plan Governance Framework

### Overview

A governance framework has been established to support Strategic Plan implementation, tracking and reporting, and updates. This framework is designed to facilitate effective decision-making related to Plan implementation among Departments and Boards and across State Agency boundaries. The following figure presents an overview of the governance framework components. Roles and responsibilities of decision-makers within this framework are described in the paragraphs following the figure.



### Sponsors

The Watershed Management Strategic Plan Sponsors will be responsible for ensuring Plan implementation is supported by appropriate resources. Sponsors will review and approve recommendations made by the Steering Committee related to implementation and updates. If issues cannot be resolved at the Steering Committee level, sponsors will make decisions taking into consideration options provided to them by the Steering Committee.

Sponsors are the Secretaries of Cal/EPA and Resources Agency, the Chair of the State Water Resources Control Board, and the Director of the California Bay-Delta Authority.

### **Implementation Steering Committee**

The Watershed Management Strategic Plan Implementation Steering Committee will be responsible for ensuring the State successfully implements the Plan. It will also be responsible for seeking and incorporating input from the California Watershed Council related to implementation and updates. The Steering Committee will be responsible for chartering and monitoring progress of Initiative Teams. The Steering Committee will consider recommendations made by initiative teams and forwarding final recommendations to the Sponsors for approval. The Steering Committee will also report implementation results to the Sponsors and California Watershed Council on a regular basis. If issues cannot be resolved at the Initiative Team level, the Steering Committee will make decisions taking into consideration options provided to it by the Initiative Team.

The Steering Committee is comprised of State Agency (e.g. boards, departments, conservancies, etc.) Deputy Directors who have decision-making authority regarding resource allocation related to Watershed Management activities.

### **Initiative Teams**

The Steering Committee will be supported by Initiative Teams responsible for refining the scope of Plan Initiatives and updating tasks and deliverables as appropriate. Initiative Teams will also be responsible for collecting data and reporting on the measures associated with their initiative and related goal. Initiative Teams will be co-sponsored by Steering Committee members to facilitate communication between the Initiative Teams and the Steering Committee.

Initiative Teams will be made up of State, federal, and local stakeholders, as appropriate, who can help make and facilitate implementation of initiative recommendations. The following table presents the co-sponsors responsible for launching initiatives during the first two years of Plan implementation:

<b>Initiative Title</b>	<b>Co-Sponsors</b>
Initiative 1: State Agency Watershed Management Governance Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Cal/EPA</li><li>▪ Resources Agency</li></ul>
Initiative 2: Program Service Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ CALFED</li><li>▪ Department of Water Resources</li><li>▪ SWRCB</li><li>▪ Resources Agency</li></ul>
Initiative 7: Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Cal/EPA</li><li>▪ Resources Agency</li></ul>